

Press Release

For immediate release

African Water Facility Liberia Sanitation Project Selected by UNFCCC as one of 2013 Outstanding Climate Innovations

Bonn, Germany, November 7, 2013 –The United Nations Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) announced Wednesday the selection of the Monrovia *Fostering Innovative Sanitation and Hygiene* (FISH) project as one of the 17 Lighthouse Activities to be showcased at the November 2013 UN Climate Change Conference in Warsaw, Poland.

Lighthouse Activities projects are selected based on their innovative and transformative qualities, and are recognized for the value of the solutions they propose to address both climate change and wider economic, social and environmental challenges.

The 2013 Lighthouse Activities were selected by a 16-member, [international advisory panel](#) as part of the secretariat's [Momentum for Change initiative](#), which is funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and the Rockefeller Foundation, and operates in partnership with the World Economic Forum.

“The 2013 Lighthouse Activities are true beacons of hope, demonstrating what happens when innovation and passion come together to address the biggest challenge of our time,” UNFCCC Executive Secretary Christiana Figueres said. “There are thousands of examples of people taking action to address climate change all over the world. The Lighthouse Activities highlight some of the most practical, scalable and replicable examples of what people, businesses, governments and industries are doing to tackle climate change, which I hope will inspire others to do the same.”

The FISH project was designed to enhance Monrovia city's capacity for sustainable city-wide fecal sludge management. The project complements efforts by the Government of Liberia and development partners to improve sanitation service access rates and reduce the vulnerability of the urban poor to diseases caused by water contamination resulting from open defecation and septic tank overflows.

Earlier this year, the project had received a €1.2 million grant from the African Water Facility (AWF) to cover 86 per cent of the financing needed for its implementation.

“The selection of the Monrovia project is a much-deserved recognition of Liberia's leadership in promoting innovation to deal more effectively with issues affecting peoples' lives and build resilience to climate change,” said Akissa Bahri, Coordinator of the African Water Facility. “This also goes to show that improving sanitation services is a must-have component of any city's resilience strategy, and that it is possible for fragile states to overcome sanitation challenges through the adoption of creative ideas meant to optimize resources recovery. The FISH project is a remarkable example to follow.”

The 17 Lighthouse Activities will be showcased at special events during the UN Climate Change Conference in Warsaw, Poland, November 11-22. Interested stakeholders can interact with the activity representatives during two social media discussions ahead of the climate conference. A [Twitter chat](#) takes place on November 6 from 16:00 to 16:30 (CET).

Participants can join in using the hashtag #m4c. A Google Hangout will take place a week later on November 13.

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About the African Water Facility (AWF): The AWF is an initiative of the African Ministers' Council on Water (AMCOW) hosted by the African Development Bank (AfDB), established in 2004 as a Special Water Fund to help African countries achieve the objectives of the Africa Water Vision 2025. The AWF offers grants from €50,000 to €5 million to support projects aligned with its mission and strategy to a wide range of institutions and organizations operating in Africa. Its three strategic priority activities are (1) **preparing investment projects** to mobilize investment funds for projects supported by AWF; (2) **enhancing water governance** to create an environment conducive for effective and sustainable investments; (3) **promoting water knowledge** for the preparation of viable projects and informed governance leading to effective and sustainable investments. Since 2006, AWF has funded 84 national and regional projects in 51 countries, including in Africa's most vulnerable states. It has mobilized more than €935 million as a result of its project preparation activities, which constitute 70 percent of its portfolio. On average, **each €1 contributed by the AWF has attracted €20** in additional follow-up investments. The AWF is entirely funded by Algeria, Australia, Austria, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Burkina Faso, Canada, Denmark, the European Commission, France, Norway, Senegal, Spain, Sweden, the United Kingdom, and the African Development Bank. The AWF is governed by a Governing Council representing its 15 donors, UN-Water Africa, the AU via NEPAD, AMCOW and the AfDB. For more information: www.africanwaterfacility.org